

*Henrietta Smith*

P O E M S.

BY

ANN YEARSLEY.

A





P O E M S,  
O N  
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

B Y  
A N N Y E A R S L E Y, H

A  
MILKWOMAN OF BRISTOL,

THE THIRD EDITION.

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L O N D O N :  
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.  
MDCCLXXXV.

P O E 1 2

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS

BY

ANN YBARLEY

MILK WOMAN OF BRISTOL



THE

LONDON

PRINTED FOR T. GADSELL, IN THE STRAND.

MDCCLXXXV

[ iii ]

A P R E F A T O R Y  
L E T T E R  
T O  
Mrs. M O N T A G U.  
B Y A F R I E N D.

---

DEAR MADAM,

Bristol, October 20, 1784.

THERE is nothing more inconvenient than a high reputation, as it subjects the possessor to continual applications, which those of a contrary character entirely escape. The delight which you are known to feel in protecting real genius, and in cherishing depressed virtue, exposes you to the present intrusion, from which

A 2

a cold



iv      A PREFATORY LETTER

a cold heart, and an illiberal spirit, would have effectually secured you.

On my return from Sandleford, a copy of verses was shewn me, said to be written by a poor illiterate woman in this neighbourhood, who sells milk from door to door. The story did not engage my faith, but the verses excited my attention; for, though incorrect, they breathed the genuine spirit of Poetry, and were rendered still more interesting, by a certain natural and strong expression of misery, which seemed to fill the heart and mind of the Author. On making diligent enquiry into her history and character, I found that she had been born and bred in her present humble station, and had never received the least education, except that her brother had taught her to write. Her mother, who was also a milk-woman, appears to have had sense and piety, and to have given an early tincture of religion to this poor woman's mind. She is about eight-and-twenty, was married very young, to a man who is said to be honest and sober, but of a turn of mind very different from her own. Repeated losses, and a  
numerous

TO MRS. MONTAGU.

numerous family, for they had six children in seven years, reduced them very low, and the rigours of the last severe winter sunk them to the extremity of distress. For your sake, dear Madam, and for my own, I wish I could entirely pass over this part of her story; but some of her most affecting verses would be unintelligible without it. Her aged mother, her six little infants, and herself (expecting every hour to lie in), were actually on the point of perishing, and had given up every hope of human assistance, when the Gentleman, so gratefully mentioned in her Poem to STELLA, providentially heard of their distress, which I am afraid she had too carefully concealed, and hastened to their relief. The poor woman and her children were preserved; but—(imagine, dear Madam, a scene which will not bear a detail) for the unhappy mother, all assistance came too late; she had the joy to see it arrive, but it was a joy she was no longer able to bear, and it was more fatal to her than famine had been. You will find our Poetess frequently alluding to this terrible circumstance, which has left a settled impression of sorrow on her mind.



vi      A PREFATORY LETTER

When I went to see her, I observed a perfect simplicity in her manners, without the least affectation or pretension of any kind: she neither attempted to raise my compassion by her distress, nor my admiration by her parts. But, on a more familiar acquaintance, I have had reason to be surprised at the justness of her taste, the faculty I least expected to find in her. In truth, her remarks on the books she has read are so accurate, and so consonant to the opinions of the best critics, that, from that very circumstance, they would appear trite and common-place, in any one who had been in habits of society; for, without having ever conversed with any body above her own level, she seems to possess the general principles of sound taste and just thinking.

I was curious to know what poetry she had read. With the Night Thoughts, and Paradise Lost, I found her well acquainted; but she was astonished to learn that Young and Milton had written any thing else. Of Pope, she had only seen the *Eloisa*; and Dryden, Spenser, Thomson, and Prior, were quite unknown to her,  
even



even by name. She has read a few of Shakespeare's Plays, and speaks of a translation of the Georgics, which she has somewhere seen, with the warmest poetic rapture.

But though it has been denied to her to drink at the *pure well-head* of Pagan Poesy, yet, from the true fountain of divine Inspiration, her mind seems to have been wonderfully nourished and enriched. The study of the sacred Scriptures has enlarged her imagination, and ennobled her language, to a degree only credible to those, who, receiving them as the voice of everlasting Truth, are at the pains to appreciate the various and exquisite beauties of composition which they exhibit. For there is, as I have heard you remark, in the Prophets, in Job, and in the Psalms, a character of thought, and a style of expression, between Eloquence and Poetry, by which a great mind, disposed to either, may be so elevated and warmed, as, with little other assistance, to become a Poet or an Orator.

By the next post, I will send you some of her wild wood-notes. You will find her, like all

viii A PREFATORY LETTER

unlettered Poets, abounding in imagery, metaphor, and personification; her faults, in this respect, being rather those of superfluity than of want. If her epithets are now and then bold and vehement, they are striking and original; and I should be sorry to see the wild vigour of her rustic muse polished into elegance, or laboured into correctness. Her ear is perfect; there is sometimes great felicity in the structure of her blank verse, and she often varies the pause with a happiness which looks like skill. She abounds in false concords, and inaccuracies of various kinds; the grossest of which have been corrected. You will find her often diffuse from redundancy, and oftener obscure from brevity; but you will seldom find in her those inexpressible poetic sins, the false thought, the puerile conceit, the distorted image, and the incongruous metaphor, the common resources of bad Poets, and the not uncommon blemishes of good ones.

If this commendation be thought exaggerated, qualify it, dear Madam, with the reflection that it belongs to one who writes under every complicated

plicated disadvantage; who is destitute of all the elegancies of literature, the accommodations of leisure, and, I will not barely say the conveniences, but the necessaries of life: to one who does not know a single rule of Grammar, and who has never even *seen* a Dictionary.

Chill Penury repress'd her noble rage,  
And froze the genial current of her soul.

Though I have a high reverence for art, study, and institution, and for all the mighty names and master spirits who have given laws to Taste, yet I am not sorry, now and then, to convince the supercilious Critic, whose mass of knowledge is not warmed by a single particle of native fire, that genius is antecedent to rules, and independent on criticism; for who, but his own divine and incomprehensible genius, pointed out to Shakespeare, while he was holding horses at the play-house door, every varied position of the human mind, every shade of discrimination in the human character? all the distinct affections, and all the complicated feelings of the heart of man? who taught him to give to the dead letter of narrative the living spirit of action;



\* A PREFATORY LETTER

action ; to combine the most philosophic turn of thinking with the warmest energies of Passion, and to embellish both with all the graces of Imagination, and all the enthusiasm of Poetry? to make every description a picture, and every sentiment an axiom? to know how every being which *did* exist, would speak and act in every supposed circumstance of situation; and how every being, which did *not* exist but in imagination, *must* speak and act, if ever he were to be called into real existence.

But to return to the subject of my Letter : When I expressed to her my surprise at two or three classical allusions in one of her Poems, and inquired how she came by them, she said she had taken them from little ordinary prints which hung in a shop-window. This hint may, perhaps, help to account for the manner in which a late untutored, and unhappy, but very sublime genius of this town \*, caught some of those ideas which diffuse through his writings a certain air of learning, the reality of which he did not possess. A great mind at once seizes

\* Chatterton.

and

and appropriates to itself whatever is new and striking; and I am persuaded that a truly poetic spirit has often the art of appearing to be deeply informed on subjects of which he only knows the general principle; by skilfully seizing the master feature, he is thought artfully to reject the detail, with which, in fact, he is unacquainted; and obtains that credit for his knowledge which is better due to his judgment.

I have the satisfaction to tell you, dear Madam, that our poor Enthusiast is active and industrious in no common degree. The Muses have not cheated her into an opinion that the retailing a few fine maxims of virtue, may exempt her from the most exact probity in her conduct. I have had some unequivocal proofs that her morality has not evaporated in sentiment, but is, I verily believe, fixed in a settled principle. Without this, with all her ingenuity, as she would not have obtained my friendship, so I should not have had the courage to solicit for her your protection.

I already anticipate your generous concurrence in a little project I have in view for her  
relief.



relief. It is not intended to place her in such a state of independence as might seduce her to devote her time to the idleness of Poetry. I hope she is convinced that the making of verses is not the great business of human life; and that, as a wife and a mother, she has duties to fill, the smallest of which is of more value than the finest verses she can write: but as it has pleased God to give her these talents, may they not be made an instrument to mend her situation, if we publish a small volume of her Poems by subscription? The liberality of my friends leaves me no room to doubt of success.—Pressing as her distresses are, if I did not think her heart was rightly turned, I should be afraid of proposing such a measure, lest it should unsettle the sobriety of her mind, and, by exciting her vanity, indispose her for the laborious employments of her humble condition; but it would be cruel to imagine that we cannot mend her fortune without impairing her virtue.

For my own part, I do not feel myself actuated by the idle vanity of a *discoverer*; for I confess, that the ambition of bringing to light a  
genius



TO MRS. MONTAGU. xiii

genius buried in obscurity, operates much less powerfully on my mind, than the wish to rescue a meritorious woman from misery, for it is not fame, but bread, which I am anxious to secure to her.

I should ask your pardon for this dull and tedious Letter, if I were not assured that you are always ready to sacrifice your most elegant pursuits to the humblest claims of humanity; and that the sweetness of renown has not lessened your sensibility for the pleasures of benevolence, nor destroyed your relish for that most touching and irresistible eloquence, *the blessing of him who was ready to perish.*

I am,

Dear MADAM,

Your much obliged,

And very faithful

Humble servant,

HANNAH MORE.



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T O T H E  
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# THE CONTENTS.

---

<b>NIGHT.</b>	To STELLA	- -	Page 1
	<i>Thoughts on the Author's own Death</i>	-	14
	To a Friend; on Valentine's Day	- -	19
	<i>Another Valentine. To another Person</i>	- -	22
	To Mrs. V——N	- -	24
	<i>A Fragment</i>	- -	29
	<i>On the sudden Death of a Friend</i>	-	34
	To Mr. R——, on his benevolent Scheme for rescuing poor Children from Vice and Misery, by promoting Sunday Schools	- - -	37
	To Mrs. M——s	- -	48
	To STELLA; on a Visit to Mrs. MONTAGU	-	51
	To the Same; on her accusing the Author of Flat- tery, and of ascribing to the Creature that Praise which is due only to the Creator	-	55
	Soliloquy	- - -	57
		3	<i>Addres</i>

lvi C O N T E N T S.

<i>Address to Friendship</i>	- - - -	60
<i>To the Honourable H—E W—E, on reading the Castle of Otranto</i>	- - -	66
<i>To Her Grace the Duchess Dowager of PORT- LAND</i>	- - - -	74
<i>On Mrs. MONTAGU</i>	- - -	78
<i>Clifton Hill</i>	- - - -	83

NIGHT.

# N I G H T.

To S T E L L A.

---

**A**T this lone hour, when Nature silent lies,  
And CYNTHIA, solemn, aids the rising scene,  
Whilst Hydra-headed Care one moment sleeps,  
And, listless, drops his galling chain to earth;  
O! let swift Fancy plume her ruffled wing, 5  
And seek the spot where sacred raptures rise;  
Where thy mild form, relax'd in guiltless sleep,  
Forgets to think, to feel; may dreams of bliss  
Lull thy soft sense, nor paint the scene of woe  
I lately told; think not my spirit near, 10  
Light airy shade, that would elude thine eye,

B

And



And shrink to nothing, conscious of thy worth.  
 Yet here I dare, in Fancy's boundless walk,  
 Invoke thy Muse, and hail thy song sublime.

MELPOMENE! thou sadly sighing maid! 15  
 Great Queen of Sorrows, in majestic weed,  
 Whose gayest airs are solemn sounds of woe;  
 Thou who awak'ft fair STELLA's soothing lay,  
 Soon as Aurora gilds the blushing East,  
 O lend thy aid, while thy soft votary sleeps, 20  
 And bid *me* boldly swell the artless line,  
 Lend me *her* pen, and guide my rustic hand,  
 To draw soft pity from the Tragic Tale,  
 Where goading Misery drives her ploughshare deep;  
 Teach me to paint the tremors of the soul 25  
 In Sorrow's deepest tints; assist the sigh,  
 And, with its breathings, swell the throbbing heart.  
 The tear-clad eye, when softer passions rush  
 T' assault the soul besieged by others' woe,

That

# N I G H T.

3

That eye where pity tips the pointed beam      30  
With treble softness—Oh! that eye is hers.

The hoary hermit, chill'd by frigid rules,  
Who totters on the hair-breadth verge of fate,  
And dies an age that he may live for ever,  
Would sudden stop, forgetful of the past,      35  
Nor heed the future, list'ning to her song;  
Her song, least part, her soaring spirit shares  
An early Heaven, anticipates her bliss,  
And quaffs nectareous draughts of joy sublime;  
Beyond yon starry firmament she roves,      40  
And basks in suns that never warm'd the earth;  
Newtonian systems lag her rapid flight,  
She pierces thro' his planetary worlds,  
And, eager, grasps creations yet to be.

Ye busy world! what are your cobweb toils,      45  
Your Sisyphéan labours? Infant piles,

B 2

To

To raise a bubble, which in air dissolves ;  
You toil an age to grasp the shining dust,  
Death trips your heels, you throw it to the wind :  
“ Ah ! let your irons on their anvils cool,” 50  
And lift a while to STELLA’S moral strain ;  
She’ll teach thy eye in mental maze to creep,  
Timid and trembling, to explore the past ;  
Alarm’d by her, the monitor within 55  
Shall aid thy search, and bring thyself to view.  
Examine deep ; that secret arbitrator  
Shall give thee self-applause or deep remorse.  
Heav’n guard thee from that Harpy, never fill’d,  
Still, still insatiate as the bird of Jove, 60  
That deeply gores the breast for meals eternal,  
Nor knows a glut from ever-growing food.  
Still struggle, restless ; sink to depths profound,  
Nor ever own a thought beneath immortal ;  
As such Jehovah views thee in the dust, 65  
As such he’ll waft thee to the plains of Heaven.

What’s



What's Death? Like infants sick of senseless toys,  
We sink to rest—awake to love and joy;  
To love and joy awakes the ravish'd soul,  
Who lived to virtue, and who own'd a God. 70  
But, ah! too daring theme—STELLA, assist!  
My humble spirit waits your social hand,  
Whose friendly beckon points to realms of bliss;  
See, STELLA soars, nor heeds my plaintive note,  
Nor will the Muse assist my sluggard flight; 75  
With rapture, see, she clasps her fav'rite maid,  
And bids me fix where Science never dawn'd;  
Hard, hard command! and yet I will obey;  
Unaided, unassisted, will deplore  
That learning, Heaven's best gift, is lost to me. 80  
Cheerless and pensive o'er the wilds of life,  
Like the poor beetle creep my hours away;  
The journey clos'd, I shoot the gulf unknown,  
To find a home, perhaps—a long lost mother.  
How does fond thought hang on her much lov'd name,

And tear each fibre of my bursting heart. 86

Ah! dear supporter of my infant mind,

Whose nobler precept bade my soul aspire

To more than tinsel joy; the filial tear

Shall drop for thee, when pleasure loudest calls. 90

The dark sky lour'd, and the storms of life

Rose high with wildest roar; no voice was heard,

But Horror's dismal train affrights our souls.

For see, from the dark caverns of the deep,

Their grieved forms arise; the crown of Death 95

Shone horribly resplendent. See! they seize

A trembling, fainting, unresisting form,

Which hourly met their grasp: Ah! spare her yet.

See from the shore V—— wafts his friendly hand;

He's born to bless, and we may yet be happy: 101

Quick let me clasp her to my panting heart,

And bear her swiftly o'er the beating wave.

In vain, in vain; some greater power unnerves

My feeble arm; inexorable Death, 105

Why

Why wilt thou tear her from me? Oh! she dies,  
 Tho' V——'s dear name had lent a feeble glow  
 To her pale cheek,—she owns him, and expires.  
 Tremendous stroke! this is thy pastime, Fate:  
 If shrinking atoms thus thy vengeance feel, 110  
 What the grand stroke of final dissolution?

Believe me, gentle friend, I could complain;  
 But what avails the deep repining sigh!  
 How inexpressive of the heart-felt pang! 114  
 When Heav'n afflicts, none should oppose the plea,  
 For who shall hold the arm that thus has wreck'd me?

Say, bright Instructress! soother of the soul,  
 Whose flowing numbers, strong as JESSÉ's harp,  
 Despair ne'er heard, but loathing left the soul;  
 Dire fiend! whom sounds of joy could ne'er allure;  
 O say, for strong-eyed Faith has borne you far 121  
 Beyond the gloomy chambers of the grave;



Speak loudly to my late corrected soul,  
 That sure reward awaits the blameless mind;  
 Else will I give the strenuous struggle o'er, 125  
 Deny a V — as delegate of Heaven,  
 Throw up your Angel mind, as painted shade,  
 Or notion strong from early precept caught,  
 Rove thro' the maze of all-alluring sense,  
 And this side JORDAN every hope shall fix: 130  
 Mere ravings all—these crude ideas die,  
 As Faith to CALVARY's mount directs my view;  
 Nor will I lose, thus humbled as I am,  
 My dear-bought claim to Immortality,

Excuse me, STELLA! lo, I guideless stray, 135  
 No friendly hand assists my wilder'd thought;  
 Uncouth, unciviliz'd, and rudely rough,  
 Unpolish'd, as the form thrown by by Heaven,  
 Not worth completion, or the Artist's hand,  
 To add a something more. Such is the mind 140

Which

Which thou may'st yet illumine; 'tis a task  
For Angels thus to raise the groveling soul,  
And bid it pant for more than earthly bliss.  
Then show Heaven's opening glories to my eyes;  
And I will view thee as the fount of light, 145  
Which pierc'd old Chaos to his depth profound,  
While all his native horrors stood reveal'd.

Yet more I ask—Ah, STELLA! aid my pen  
To paint the grateful rapture, to describe  
How the big heart, exulting, scarcely beats, 150  
And joy too vast oppresses all the frame!  
The extacy in languor leaves the soul,  
And all her slacken'd faculties relax.  
The web of Gratitude's so finely wrought,  
Thought hardly dares to touch it; soft'ning time, 155  
And frequent pauses, give it strength of growth,  
E'en to oppression. Oh, delightful pain!  
My soul wants firm support. The gloomy joy

I once

I once preferr'd, and thought the nobler choice,  
Has lost its relish; grand mistake of fools, 160  
In sullen self absorb'd! Lo! far estrang'd  
From social joy, I fix'd my woe-fraught eye  
Where riches blaz'd upon a murky soul,  
And serv'd to light its errors to the world;  
I met th' ungenial influence, bright, but cold, 165  
And, hardening by th' encounter, deep I sunk  
Abstracted—Scorn and Silence led the way,  
No matter whither:—The too gaudy Sun  
Shines not for me; no bed of Nature yields  
Her varied sweets; no music wakes the grove; 170  
No vallies blow, no waving grain uprears  
Its tender stalk to cheer my coming hour;  
But horrid Silence broods upon my soul,  
With wing deep-drench'd in Misery's torpid dews.  
That heart which once had join'd the laughing train,  
Whose guiltless rapture flew on Fancy's wing, 176  
Nor once suspected thus to feel the gripe

Of



Of iron-claw'd Despair, now yields to pangs,  
 To agonies more exquisite than Death;  
 That is—to live. O, Nature! shriek no more, 180  
 I have no answer for thy thrilling voice;  
 Go, melt the foul, less frozen in her pow'rs,  
 And bid her weep o'er miseries not her own;  
 Hold up the fainting babe who sighs its wants,  
 So mutely incoherent; mark the head 185  
 Which age and woe bend tremulous to earth;  
 Whose lamp, now quivering in the socket, calls  
 In haste for aid, ne'er finds it, and goes out.  
 Plead thou for those, but never talk of aid  
 For miseries like mine, which mock relief. 190

Thus desperately I reason'd, madly talk'd—  
 Thus horrid as I was, of rugged growth,  
 More savage than the nightly-prowling wolf;  
 She feels what Nature taught; I, wilder far,  
 Oppos'd her dictates—but my panting soul 195

Now

Now shivers in the agony of change,  
 As insects tremble in the doubtful hour  
 Of transmigration; loth to lose the form  
 Of various tints, its fondly cherish'd pride;  
 Disrob'd like me they fall, and boast no more. 200

STELLA, how strong thy gentle argument!  
 By thee convinc'd, I scorn the iron lore,  
 The savage virtues of untutor'd minds:  
 In thy mild rhetoric dwells a social love  
 Beyond my wild conceptions, optics false! 205  
 Thro' which I falsely judg'd of polish'd life.

This is the sullen curse of surly souls,  
 To disbelieve the virtues which they feel not.  
 Ah, STELLA! I'm a convert; thou hast tun'd  
 My rusting powers to the bright strain of joy: 210  
 My chill'd ideas quit their frozen pole  
 Of blank Despair, and, gently usher'd in

By

By grateful Rapture, meet thy genial warmth :  
'Tis more than joy, or joy to an extreme;  
Then teach my honest heart to feel more faint, 215  
More moderate in her grateful change, or lend  
Fair Elocution, who the Mimic aids,  
To paint in brightest hues the unfelt joy.

Accept the wild and untaught rapture, form'd  
From simple Nature, in her artless guise; 220  
Yet in its wildness charming to excess  
To souls like thine, distasteful to the vain,  
Who relish nothing honest; nothing love  
But flattering strains, trick'd out with every art  
Of gaudy Eloquence, and trim Deceit. 225



THOUGHTS  
ON THE  
AUTHOR'S OWN DEATH.

WRITTEN WHEN VERY YOUNG.

---

THUS, when the fatal stroke of Death 's design'd,  
On oozy banks th' expiring swan reclin'd,  
Her own sad requiem sings in languid note,  
While o'er the stream the dying echoes float.

But, ah ! can youth dwell on the tragic part ?     5  
Can I describe the trembling, panting heart ?  
In Fancy's frolic age can I relate  
The pangs, the terrors of a dying state ?

Yes

THOUGHTS, &c. 15

Yes—tho' unskill'd, I'll the grim shade pursue,  
 And bring the distant terror to my view ; 10  
 Dwell on the horrors of that gloomy hour ;  
 Death, made familiar, loses half his power.  
 Peace then, ye passions of ungovern'd youth,  
 Foes to reflection, enemies to truth !  
 Let me, unruffled by your clamorous voice, 15  
 Make the drear regions of the tomb my choice ;  
 And while sad Fancy paints the dismal scene,  
 Where restless ghosts by midnight moons are seen  
 Stalk o'er the gloomy grave, Muse ! be it thine  
 To rouse the vain, the giddy, and supine, 20  
 Who Pleasure's rounds pursue ; while young Desire  
 Wakes the gay dream, and feeds the dangerous fire :  
 From these I fly—and now, my pensive soul,  
 Mark the harsh scream of yon death-boding owl ;  
 Perhaps she calls some lingering, tardy ghost 25  
 To smell the world, ere the dread hour be lost  
 That parts the night from morn. Come, restless souls,  
 Relax from torture ; you whom Fate controuls

To purge your earthly crimes in liquid fire,  
In anguish plung'd, till ages shall expire ; 30  
(This, ROME's grand tenet) sin thus wash'd away,  
Pure, bright, and cleans'd, you'll wing to endless  
day.

Presumption, hold ! Lo, o'er yon misty tomb  
Leans a sad spectre, and bemoans the doom  
Of never-erring Justice ; heavenly power ! 35  
Support and guard me in this gloomy hour  
Of dread inquiry !—" Say, thou wretched soul,  
O teach a young, rash, inexperienced fool,  
What 'tis to die, and where thou wing'dst thy  
way,

When turn'd a wanderer from thy house of clay ? 40  
Did'st tread soft lawns, or seek Elysian groves,  
Where Poets feign the lover's spirit roves ?  
Or, on light pinions cut the closing air,  
And to each planetary world repair ?  
Or, guideless, stray where dismal groans resound, 45  
And forked lightnings quiver on the ground ?

Or



AUTHOR'S OWN DEATH. 17

Or did sad fiends thy unhous'd spirit meet,  
 And with shrill yellings the poor trembler greet  
 To the dark world ? Describe that scene of woe  
 Which thou hast felt, and may I never know !" 50  
 " Thou'lt know, indeed," it answers with a groan,  
 " The pangs of death too sure shall be thy own ;  
 Pains yet unfelt must seize thy every part,  
 And Death's cold horrors hover round thy heart ;  
 Thy dying eyes fix'd on some darling friend, 55  
 While strong convulsions their wild orbs extend ;  
 One gasp, and deep eternity in view,  
 The soul shoots forth, and groans a last adieu.  
 I dare no more—but Oh ! too curious maid,  
 Seek not to pierce th' impenetrable shade 60  
 Which wraps futurity ; thou 'rt sure to die ;  
 Rest there, nor farther search, nor question why ;  
 Scan not Omnipotence—of that beware ;  
 Oft the too curious eye is dimm'd by blank despair."

Farewel, poor Ghost! ye horrors of the night, 65  
Begone, nor more my shudd'ring soul affright;  
The question unresolv'd I soon shall know,  
Then let me haste from this sad scene of woe.

Henceforth, vain Pleasure, I renounce thy joy,  
Enchanting Fair, who tempt'ft but to destroy; 70  
Ye thoughtless maids who transient dreams pursue,  
No more my moments must be lost with you;  
No more my soul in empty mirth shall share,  
Or fondly relish pleasures ting'd with care.

And thou, all-merciful! omniscient Power! 75  
O teach me to redeem each mis-spent hour;  
In youth the mind's best gifts most strongly shine,  
Ah! let them not too suddenly decline!  
In mercy add a few remaining years,  
The grave shall lose its sting, my soul shall lose its  
fears. 80

# To a FRIEND;

## ON VALENTINE'S DAY.

---

**T**HO' blooming shepherds hail this day  
 With love, the subject of each lay,  
 Yet friendship tunes my artless song,  
 To thee the grateful themes belong.

STREPHON, I never will repine, 5  
 Tho' destin'd not thy Valentine;  
 O'er friendship's nobler heights we'll rove,  
 Nor heed the soft'ning voice of love.



Strangers to Passion's tyrant reign,  
 Careless, we'll range the happier plain, 10  
 Where all those calmer joys we'll prove,  
 Which wait sublime platonic love.

Yet I'll allow a future day,  
 When friendship must at last give way;  
 When thou, forgetful shalt resign 15  
 The maid who wrote this Valentine.

Think not, my friend, I dream of *love*,  
 That with some happier maid thou'lt prove;  
 Friendship alone is my design  
 In this officious Valentine. 20

Yet, when that victor God shall reign,  
 And conquer'd Friendship quits the plain,  
 This gentle whisperer captive take,  
 'T will all thy former kindness wake.

But

ON VALENTINE'S DAY. 21

But if its pleadings you deny, 25

And fain wou'd have remembrance die,

Then to devouring flames consign

My too ill-fated Valentine,

# Another VALENTINE.

TO ANOTHER PERSON.

---

SAY, gentle Shepherd, shall this day,  
 Propitious to my amorous lay,  
 Infuse thro' all thy vital frame  
 The tender, trembling, thrilling flame?

This day prefers the lover's prayers,  
 This day the yielding fair one hears;  
 Shall blooming STREPHON then repine,  
 At being hail'd a Valentine?

O! turn



ANOTHER VALENTINE. 23

O! turn thine eyes, and view yon dove,  
He'll charm thy every sense to love ; 10  
While, from the bending spray, his mate  
Shall love-inspired notes repeat.

Then, whilst thy eager charming eyes  
Run o'er these lines, may love arise  
Within thy breast to equal mine, 15  
Nor read in vain my Valentine.

My powerless pen despairs to name,  
What raptures wait a mutual flame ;  
Then be thy softer wishes mine,  
I'll bless the day of Valentine. 20

To Mrs. V——N.

---

SEQUESTER'D from the busy whirl of man,  
 Permit soft Fancy in the vale to stray;  
 In dark obscurity my life began,  
 Where Science scorn'd to cheer the dreary way.

Bright sentiment, if unimprov'd, must die, 5  
 And great ideas, unassisted, fall;  
 On Learning's wing we pierce th' empyreal sky;  
 But Nature's untaught efforts are but small.

Pardon, bright fair! my hapless fate deplore,  
 Nor scorn the grateful, tho' unletter'd line; 10  
 The Eastern slave's permitted to adore,  
 When in bright Sol he sees a Godhead shine.

Heaven

TO MRS. V——N. 25

Heaven spurns him not, but spares the untaught mind,  
Who ne'er religion's nobler truths has prov'd;  
Thus, in thy bosom, where each virtue's join'd, 15  
Let Pity plead where Reason can't approve.

To cheer the gloom of solitude's lone hour,  
In this sad bosom desert made by woe,  
May busy memory's ever pleasing power,  
In grateful vision still your form bestow. 20

Belov'd idea, on my heart imprest,  
Which time or anguish never shall efface,  
Till Death shall sternly bid its motion rest,  
And in its stead his barbed dart shall place.

Not valued less, with gratitude refin'd, 25  
Shall my warm heart your honour'd partner share;  
With joy I'll own how great, how good his mind,  
And hail each heavenly virtue planted there.

O! had



O! had there stepp'd before offended Heaven,  
 But ten so perfect for a guilty race, 30  
 The dread, tremendous word had ne'er been given,  
 Nor streaming fires have purg'd the blasted place.

How different those who waste the thoughtless hour,  
 And, jocund, dance to Folly's trifling lay;  
 Death, mask'd, oft shares the ball and festive bower,  
 And beckons, unawares, the soul away. 36

Aghast she views the dark and dismal vale,  
 Where ghosts of long-departed Pleasures roam;  
 Sad comforts! where their poor expedients fail,  
 Say, what pleas'd guide shall waft the trembler home?

O, Misery! readier than the pitying eye 41  
 Of Heaven, why do thy terrors round me wait?  
 Avaunt! my spirits mount with extacy,  
 For V——'s bright virtues speak a happier fate.

Then

Then may not I, with humblest hope aspire, 45  
At distance follow where they boldly stray ?  
Ah, no ! I want that strong, celestial fire,  
Which, eagle-like, dares the Meridian ray.

Capacious virtues fill th' extensive mind,  
That mind which this low world could ne'er contain ;  
O'er peopled orbs it wanders unconfin'd ; 51  
Yet sounds of woe oft lure it back again :

And fix'd, like NIOBE, o'er the rueful scene  
Of human mis'ry the mild spirit stands ;  
No more the bosom boasts a state serene, 55  
But melts, distress'd by Pity's soft commands.

Dissolv'd in woe, it scorns the gay parade  
Of dazzling pride, and with the mourner mourns ;  
Flies with pale Mis'ry to the dreary shade,  
And brings it back by soft, yet swift returns. 60

Rais'd

Rais'd as I am to sweet domestic joy  
 By bounteous V——N, will she the line refuse?  
 You who, like Heaven, wou'd save and not destroy,  
 Say, will you scorn the poor unpolish'd Muse?

Oft when the frugal meal salutes my eyes, 65  
 Big rapture heaves my late desponding breast;  
 I see your form in every blessing rise,  
 It smiles content, and bids my sorrows rest.

Hope, lovely phantom! is, and shall be mine,  
 She hovers round, amidst this waste of woe; 70  
 Points my once cheerless soul to views sublime,  
 From Earth's sad scene, and Mis'ry's wreck below.

Pour down, great God! thy choicest blessings here,  
 Such virtues merit thy peculiar love;  
 O! make their beauteous progeny thy care, 75  
 And lift them late to all thy joys above!



## F R A G M E N T.

—MY soul is out of tune,

No harmony reigns here, 'tis discord all :

Be dumb, sweet Choristers, I heed you not ;

Then why thus swell your liquid throats, to cheer

A wretch, undone, for ever lost to joy, 5

And mark'd for ruin ? Seek yon leafy grove,

Indulgent bliss there waits you ; shun this spot

Drear, joyless, vacant, as my wasted soul,

Disrob'd of all her bliss : here heave, my heart,

Here sigh thy woes away ; unheard the groan, 10

Unseen

Unseen the falling tear; in this lone wild  
 No busy fool invades thy hoarded griefs,  
 And smiles in ignorance at what he feels not.  
 Yet, yet indulge not, list'ning winds may catch  
 Coherent sighs, and waft them far away, 15  
 Where levity holds high the senseless roar  
 Of laughter, and pale woe, abash'd, retires.  
 Or, shou'd my woes be to the winds diffus'd,  
 No longer mine, once past the quiv'ring lip;  
 Like flying atoms in the sightless air, 20  
 Some might descend on the gay, grinning herd;  
 But few, how few, wou'd reach the feeling mind!

Officious Truth! unwelcome guest to most,  
 Yet I will own thee, and bid Hope good night,  
 Fond, soothing flatterer! Nineteen years are past, 25  
 Since first I listen'd to her pleasing lore;  
 Ah, me! how bright she painted future scenes,  
 And sweetly spoke of blessings yet unborn!

Now,

# A FRAGMENT.

31

Now, fond Deceiver, where's the promis'd good ?  
 But, Oh ! thou'rt lovely, and I'll ne'er accuse 30  
 Or hate thee, tho' we never meet again.

With thee, Despair, must I then tread the path  
 Of tedious life, nor cast one look behind,  
 On all the piles of blifs gay Hope had rais'd ? 34  
 But Heaven thought otherwise—O, generous world !  
 Thou who so frankly hold'st th' embitter'd draught,  
 Accept my furly thanks, and few are due  
 Where little is bestow'd. The reasoner raves,  
 Lifts the hard eye, and with long-winded speech,  
 And self-applauding dialect, condemns 40  
 My mind, thus straying from the trodden path :  
 I heed you not, nor have I time to spin  
 The thread of argument ; yet fain wou'd know  
 The ready road to rest. Teach me, ye wise,  
 You who have trod the endless, endless whirl 45  
 Of measureless conjecture, still upheld



By brilliant Fancy's rapture-giving wing :  
 O you ! whose spirits rove beyond yon orbs,  
 To find the realms of rest, for such there are,  
 To prove a home when the sad soul shall need it. 50  
 Imagination wanders, while the eye  
 Seems far extended, tho' the senseless balls  
 Distinguish nought, but, every sense call'd in,  
 Is buried in the dusky, deep recess  
 Of meditation. What's the grand result ? 55  
 Ye studious sages, where's the fix'd abode ?  
 Where's that eternal home, beyond the grave ?  
 Oh ! deign to tell a fellow-wretch like me,  
 Unwilling to be nothing ; are not you ?  
 Else why this search—and where's the great success ?  
 Say, have you found it ? can you teach the road 61  
 Which thither leads ? Ah, no ! th' accounts brought  
                   home  
 Differ so far, millions of Heavens are formed ;  
 Each vain philosopher, by pride misled,

A FRAGMENT.

33

Presents you a futurity his own ;

65

By that secur'd, the self-sufficient sage,

Indifferent, views the group of anxious souls

Searching the path to rest ; if his they miss,

He swears no other way can e'er be found,

And then consigns them o'er to endless woe.

70

Oh ! narrow notion of a God supreme !

Oh ! barbarous portrait of a God all love !

I'll think no more. Ye deep-distracting doubts,

Bewilder not my soul ; for see, the page

Of boundless Mercy, and of Christian Faith,

75

Clears up the doubtful future ; all is peace,

Hope dawns, an earnest of the perfect day.

ON THE

Sudden Death of a FRIEND.

---

“ **A** PPEAR, thou fightless Minister of Death,  
 “ Go seek the spot where guiltless joys reside,  
 “ Seize DELIA’S frame, suspend at once her breath,  
 “ And from its long-lov’d home the wond’ring soul  
 divide.

“ Be deaf to all, nor heed the plaintive moan 5  
 “ Of weeping husband, parent, child, or friend;  
 “ ’Tis my high will that she attend my throne,  
 “ Where flow those perfect joys which never shall  
 have end.”

So



ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND. 35

So spake th' Omnipotent. The spirit heard,  
With azure pinions veil'd he skims the air, 10  
The heavenly regions quickly disappear'd,  
He, unperceiv'd, alights beside the happy pair.

Amaz'd he view'd this feat of humble love,  
Content and joy in every breast elate,  
One moment mourn'd his errand from above; 15  
While mid' the cheerful group the thoughtless victim  
fate.

With eye askance he aims the deadly blow,  
Nor dares to look while he directs the dart;  
No more her cheeks with purple blushes glow,  
But all the spirits rush to guard the fainting heart. 20

In vain, in vain! the heart refuses aid,  
An iron slumber seals her heavy eyes;

36 ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

She sinks in death—th' astonish'd soul, dismay'd,  
Bursts thro' the doors of life, and seeks more friendly  
skies.

Hail, Spirit, disengag'd from cumbrous clay! 25  
Let not our tears retard thy blissful flight;  
The sigh dissolves in faith; pursue thy way,  
'Till Heaven's full joys shall open on thy ravish'd  
flight.

O, THYRSIS! raise thy low declining head,  
Nor sink beneath this mighty weight of woe, 30  
Mourn not thy love, nor think thy DELIA dead;  
She lives where boundless joys shall ever, ever flow.

To Mr. R——,

ON HIS

Benevolent Scheme for rescuing Poor Children  
from Vice and Misery,

BY PROMOTING

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

---

O, R——! my timid soul would fain aspire  
To rapture such as thine; to the pure zeal  
Which fires thy soul in blest Religion's cause.  
Say, can I catch one faint, one glimmering spark,  
To warm my cheerless bosom? Will the flame 5  
Which ever feeds thy fervency of soul,  
Illumine mine? Ah, no! on me 'twere lost;



38 TO MR. R——, ON HIS SCHEME

My faculties, my poverty of thought,  
Wou'd ever disappoint the grand design,  
And render great commissions all abortive. 10

Vain were the hope to save a ruin'd world !  
Ev'n JESU's sufferings ne'er convinc'd the whole ;  
Then shall an atom the fix'd axis move,  
And win a world from hell ? Thou greatly dar'ft,  
Yet limited thy power ; stand forth, ye few ! 15  
You who wou'd give a lustre to your name,  
And prove the grand impression of JEHOVAH ;  
Who weep, like R——, the glory of your God,  
Defac'd, demolish'd, beauty trod in dust ;  
Leave not the wreck deserted on the beach, 20  
Where Ignorance, Vice, and loud-mouth'd Repro-  
bation,  
Exulting yell, and wring the melting soul :  
O ! freeze, to hear the hoary-headed finner,  
With ceaseless profanation, taint the air ;

Grown

OF PROMOTING SUNDAY SCHOOLS. 39

Grown old in dark stupidity, he treads, 25  
Fearless, tho' feeble; on the verge of fate  
Sin leaves him not; and innate flames of vice  
Still fiercely burn; the fact exists in will:  
The last remain of life presents a gloom  
Which frights the shrinking soul; lo! back she starts,  
Struck with dire horror, loth to hear the sound, 31  
The dreadful summons of offended Heaven—  
She lingers—the strong blast to atoms rends  
The frame which held her,—O! ye better souls,  
Ye nobler few, who slumber in your race, 35  
Tho' well begun, and forwarded with hope,  
Say, will you see a fellow-spirit lost,  
Thus swallow'd in the ever-yawning gulf,  
That frights the mental eye, and e'en appals  
The man who firmest stands, nor lend your aid 40  
To save him, as a soul once meant for Heaven?  
O, think! the coming hour will soon be your's;

40 TO MR. R —, ON HIS SCHEME

Let not a form which bears your Maker's image

Defeat the end of being: know 'tis your's,

In heavenly tints to dip the infant soul; 45

To raise the new idea, lift it high,

Ev'n to JEHOVAH's Throne: the ductile mind,

Pliant as wax, shall wear the mould you give;

Sharp Gratitude you've call'd to life, shall cut,

In ciphers deep, the now expanded heart; 50

And, ev'n beyond the chambers of the grave,

The joyous spirit shall your records bear,

To meet your eyes when trembling worlds expire.

What then shall live, or stand in that dread hour,

But acts like these, when panting spirits call 55

For every little test to aid their plea?

May your's resound, supported in the blast

By grateful Infants, and by ripen'd Man,

To whom you gave perfection. Angels smile,

And songs of glory shake the vault of Heaven. 60

Not



OF PROMOTING SUNDAY SCHOOLS. 41

Not to the vain I lift my poor appeal,  
Who never yet have dar'd to own a foul,  
Or name a Deity with heart-felt joy;  
'Tis to the mind who feels like generous R——,  
Whose heart can mourn, whose manly eye can melt,  
At the dread thought of human souls destroy'd. 66

What pen, tho' dipp'd in horror's deepest dye,  
Can justly paint the poor unletter'd tribe,  
Assembled in a group? The florid youth,  
Robust, impetuous, ardent in his strength, 70  
Lively and bounding as the skipping roe,  
The blush of beauty glowing on his cheek;  
*Within*, a strong epitome of hell;  
*There* vices rage, and passions wildly roar;  
Strong appetites, which never knew restraint, 75  
Scream for indulgence, till the soul distract,  
Seizes in haste the draught of poisons mix'd  
When sin began, and ruin'd nature fell;

The

42 TO MR. R —, ON HIS SCHEME

The dire infusion stronger grows by time ;  
 And still fermenting, sins on sins arise, 80  
 In order horrible. Thus ever lost,  
 The poor benighted soul ne'er hopes to light  
 On GILEAD's sovereign balm, its worth not known,  
 Or long misus'd ; ah ! hapless, hapless state,  
 Where Immortality itself is sick, 85  
 And hopes annihilation. Dreadful thought !  
 Poor miserable refuge ! poorer still  
 The soul who hopes to find it. O, befriend,  
 Ere 'tis too late, the tender, budding mind,  
 Now choak'd by ignorance ; cherish the spark, 90  
 The particle of Godhead, which impels  
 To good if nourish'd, if o'erwhelm'd must die !

Ye sacred few, who shudder at the sound  
 Of blasphemy, breath'd from the tender lip  
 Whose lisping accent Innocence shou'd guide, 95  
 Whose heart shou'd white-rob'd Purity adorn :

O, think,

OF PROMOTING SUNDAY SCHOOLS. 43

O, think, how lost the beauteous reprobate  
Of twelve or fourteen years, nurs'd up in sin;  
On whose sweet form her bounteous Maker smil'd,  
And gave, as the grand stroke of fair Creation: 100  
Her passions soft and gentle; pure her thought;  
Her soul so Angel-like, it spoke perfection;  
Eyes form'd to bend the stubborn breast of man  
To more than human softness; accents mild  
To charm his ear, and sooth his fullen soul, 105  
When panting in the iron grasp of woe!  
O! she was meant so perfect, fair, and good,  
That Angels with unusual ardor gaz'd,  
Blest the fair form, and hail'd the joyous hour!  
But ah! down, down she sinks, for ever lost, 110  
For ever tarnish'd, blasted in the bud;  
The early falsehood points the flowing tongue,  
The artful leer deforms the eager eye;  
The smile oft practis'd, deeply to deceive;  
Each soft allurement Heaven so frankly gave, 115  
All,



44 TO MR. R —, ON HIS SCHEME

All, all devoted to eternal shame :

Charming in sin, too oft she meets her fate,

So early, that the most obdurate weeps,

And gives that pity she was form'd to raise.

Awake, ye rich, that sleep ! awake to save ! 120

And infants, yet unborn, in choral song,

Shall bless the hand which form'd a social father,

A father on whose lip instruction hangs,

Who snatches from the burning flame the brand !

The poor illiterate, chill'd by freezing want, 125

Within whose walls pale Penury still sits,

With icy hand impressing every meal,

Cannot divide his slender, hard-earn'd mite

Betwixt his bodily and mental wants ;

The soul must go—for hunger loudly pleads, 130

And Nature will be answer'd ; thus his race,

Envelop'd, groping, sink in vulgar toils ;

To

OF PROMOTING SUNDAY SCHOOLS. 45

To eat and sleep includes the soul's best wish ;  
And mean deceit, and treacherous, low-phras'd guile,  
Fill the vast space for better purpose given. 135

Oppress'd like you, so AMRAM's son once felt,  
O'erburthen'd with a gross inconstant race ;  
Fain wou'd ye to their promis'd CANAAN guide  
These wretched wanderers, lead them to their rest,  
As nursing fathers bear the sucking babe ; 140  
Fain wou'd ye to the sheltering hive allure,  
And fix the swarm where endless pleasures flow.

\* Take off, great God ! some portion of thy spirit,  
Too much for one weak form ; o'erpower'd he sinks,  
Yet glories in the flame ; and fainting thus, 145  
Wou'd lift a world to Heaven. Omniscient Power !  
Bring forward yet thy seventy elect !

\* Not wishing to diminish a spirit of Religion, but in allusion to the Second Chapter of NUMBERS, Verse 17 ; " And I will take  
" off that spirit which is upon thee, and I will put it upon them."

Bid

46 TO MR. R—, ON HIS SCHEME

Bid them to thy great mandaté fix their seal,  
 And loudly sound —“ Ye chofen, aid my people ;  
 Guide them, I charge you, thro’ the dreary wilds,  
 Support the faint, and tell the lazy-blind, 151  
 Who, mole-like, never faw, nor ever wifh’d it ;  
 O, tell them, ’tis in Mercy you are given ;  
 That unto you I gave extenfive fouls,  
 Great faculties, and ample means, to fave 155  
 Souls I thought worth creating. Then rejoice,  
 That you are thus commiffion’d ; open’d fair  
 To *you* the path of glory, while *their* fouls  
 Wander in darknefs, and defpair to find  
 Salvation without help. To you I give. 160  
 The means ; then answer well your facred charge.”

Ye Heaven-attempting fouls, where virtues lie  
 Liftlefs, inactive, waiting but the call  
 Of great JEHOVAH, liften to his voice,  
 A voice ne’er heard in vain ; hark ! hark ! it founds  
 From



OF PROMOTING SUNDAY SCHOOLS. 47

From Misery's lowest shed; the accent soft, 166  
The humble sigh, the infant's early tear,  
The husband's stifled, sympathetic groan,  
The mother's feelings, more than ever felt,  
Tho' borne in silence and in pensive mood. 170  
These are all shades in which the Godhead's seen;  
Well felt those woes where great Religion sits  
On the house-top, and sheds her heavenly dew  
On the poor group;—be't your's to fix her there.  
In dress like this, Omniscience softly tries 175  
Your friendly doors, and thus disguis'd, oft meets  
The stern repulse, and virtue-killing frown.

## To Mrs. M—S.

**P**ARDON, much honour'd Fair ! this humble lay,  
 Nor scorn the tribute Gratitude may pay;  
 No rapturous Muse e'er warm'd my rustic breast,  
 Nor dare I own the bright exalted guest;  
 Far flies the Muse where radiant Science reigns, 5  
 Inspires the soul, and elevates her strains;  
 Then rapture, melody, and sense conspire,  
 And PHOEBUS fiercely twangs the sprightly lyre;  
 Far let her fly—if Gratitude be mine,  
 Her voice shall match the whole harmonious Nine;  
 The full-fraught heart, with fiercer ardors rise, 11  
 And pierce, resistless, thro' yon azure skies;

Nor pauses short of the Celestial Throne,  
But seeks the ear she's certain is her own;  
There loudly sounds—a voice by Mercy given, 15  
Whilst echoes vibrate thro' the vaults of Heaven,  
There sounds your name, while list'ning Angels bend  
The well-tun'd harp, and to the tale attend.  
In that great day when mingled nations stand—  
Some wish, some dread JEHOVAH's last command, 20  
Shall not my little ones, with ardor raise  
Your plaudit high, who prop their infant days;  
Whose voice has call'd them from the depths of woe,  
Suppress'd the sigh, forbid the tear to flow?

Low on the earth, by anguish crush'd, I lay— 25  
I mourn'd the night, nor hail'd the coming day,  
When bright AURORA tipp'd the Eastern skies,  
Hearts blest'd with plenty bade the Goddess rise;  
Not so with me—to Misery resign'd,  
On her cold lap my wretched head reclin'd; 30

E

Around,



Around, grim horrors take their ghastly stand,  
And Famine executes her dire command,  
Nor once relents;—the tear reluctant flows,  
Not for my own, but for my infants' woes :  
The Stoic's sullen gloom had fill'd my soul, 35  
Forbad the sigh, and check'd the tears that roll ;  
Ev'n smiling Hope, soft soother of the mind,  
Like MILTON's Guardian Angel, had resign'd  
Her charge as lost ; homeward to Heaven she flies,  
And grim Despair, and all her furies rise ; 40  
O, dismal Fiend ! to thee I give the world,  
From all its joys, and shadowy visions hurl'd ;  
The contest o'er, eternal worlds are mine,  
Where ransom'd spirits taste repose divine.

[ 51 ]

TO

STELLA;

ON A

Visit to Mrs. MONTAGU.

---

UNEQUAL, lost to the aspiring claim,

I neither ask, nor own th' immortal name

Of Friend ; ah, no ! its ardors are too great,

My soul too narrow, and too low my state ;

STELLA ! soar on, to nobler objects true,

5

Pour out your soul with your lov'd MONTAGU ;

But, ah ! shou'd either have a thought to spare,

Slight, trivial, neither worth a smile or tear,

E 2

Let

Let it be mine ;—when glowing raptures rise,  
And each, aspiring, seeks her native skies ;      10  
When Fancy wakes the soul to extacy,  
And the rapt mind is touch'd with Deity,  
Quick let me from the hallow'd spot retire,  
Where sacred Genius lights his awful fire.

Crush'd as I am, by Fortune's adverse power,      15  
I hail the joys which wait thy happier hour ;  
To hear the music of *her* matchless tongue,  
On which the nameless sweets of wit are hung ;  
What bliss the friendship of the wise to share,  
Of soul superior, and of virtues rare !      20  
Where Genius in familiar converse sits,  
Crowns real worth, and blasts pretending Wits ;  
Where great ideas, fed by Fancy, glow,  
And soul-expanding notes in rapture flow ;  
Where pointed thought in polish'd diction drest,      25  
With every grace assaults the yielding breast ;

O, powers



VISIT TO MRS. MONTAGU. 53

O, powers of Genius ! even the Miser's heart,  
In the sweet transport bears a transient part ;  
He thrills, unconscious whence his pleasures come,  
Who ne'er had dreamt of rapture but at home ; 30  
But, ah ! the slight impression quickly dies,  
Or on the noxious surface floating lies ;  
The momentary virtue ne'er was brought  
To frame one bounteous deed, one generous thought ;  
His harden'd spirit only knows to shun 35  
The lore of wisdom, and the genial fun  
Of warm humanity ; ah ! joyless breast,  
Which never hail'd a self-rewarding guest !  
Then fly, cold wretch, to thy congenial cell,  
And quit the haunts where sweet sensations dwell. 40

How has your bounty cheer'd my humble state,  
And chang'd the colour of my gloomy fate !  
Still shall your image sooth my pensive soul,  
When slow-pac'd moments, big with mischiefs, roll ;

Still shall I, eager, wait your wish'd return, 45  
 From that bright Fair who decks a SHAKESPEARE'S  
 urn

With deathless glories; every ardent prayer  
 Which gratitude can waft from souls sincere,  
 Each warm return to generous bounty due,  
 Shall warm my heart for you and MONTAGU. 50  
 Blest pair! O, had not souls like yours been given,  
 The stupid Atheist well might doubt a Heaven;  
 Convinc'd, he now deserts his gloomy stand,  
 Owns MIND the noblest proof of a creating hand,  
 GALEN'S conversion, by externals wrought, 55  
 Dropt far beneath sublimity of *Thought*;  
 But cou'd he those superior wonders find,  
 Which form and actuate your nobler mind,  
 How wou'd the Heathen, struck with vast surprise,  
 Atoms deny while spirit fill'd his eyes. 60

To the Same ;

ON HER

ACCUSING THE AUTHOR OF FLATTERY,

AND OF

Ascribing to the Creature that Praise  
which is due only to the Creator.

---

**E**XCUSE me, STELLA, sunk in humble state,  
With more than needful awe I view the great ;

No glossy diction e'er can aid the thought,

First stamp'd in ignorance, with error fraught.

My friends I've prais'd—they stood in heavenly  
guise

5

When first I saw them, and my mental eyes

E 4

Shall



Shall in that heavenly rapture view them still,  
For mine's a stubborn and a savage will ;  
No customs, manners, or soft arts I boast,  
On my rough soul your nicest rules are lost ;      10  
Yet shall unpolish'd gratitude be mine,  
While STELLA deigns to nurse the spark divine,  
A savage pleads—let e'en her errors move,  
And your forgiving spirit melt in love,  
O, cherish gentle Pity's lambent flame,      15  
From Heaven's own bosom the soft pleader came !  
Then deign to bless a soul, who'll ne'er degrade  
Your gift, tho' sharpest miseries invade !  
You I acknowledge, next to bounteous Heaven,  
Like his, your influence cheers where'er 'tis given ;  
Blest in dispensing ! gentle STELLA, hear      21  
My only, short, but pity-moving prayer,  
That thy great soul may spare the rustic Muse,  
Whom Science ever scorn'd, and errors still abuse,

## S O L I L O Q U Y.

---

— W H A T folly to complain,

Or throw my woes against the face of Heaven?

Ills self-created prey upon my soul,

And rob each coming hour of soften'd Peace.

What then? Is Fate to blame? I chose distress; 5

Free will was mine; I might have still been happy

From a fore-knowledge of the dire effect,

And the sad bondage of resistless love.

I knew the struggles of a wounded mind,

Not self-indulging, and not prone to vice, 10

Knew all the terrors of conflicting passion,

Too stubborn foe, and ever unsubdued;

Yet

Yet rashly parley'd with the mighty victor.

Infectious mists upon my senses hang,

More deadly than LETHEAN dews which fall 15

From SOMNUS' bough, on the poor wearied wretch,

Whose woes are fully told! —

The dire contagion creeps thro' all my frame,

Seizes my heart, and drinks my spirit up.

Ah! fatal poison, whither dost thou tend? 20

Tear not my soul with agonizing pains;

There needs no more; the world to me is lost,

And all the whirl of life-unneeded thrift.

I sicken at the Sun, and fly his beams,

Like some sad ghost which loves the moonless night,

And pensive shuns the morn. The deep recess 26

Where dim-ey'd Melancholy silent sits,

Beckoning the poor desponding, flighted wretch,

Suits well. 'Tis here I find a gloomy rest;

'Tis here the fool's loud clatter leaves me still, 30

Nor force unwilling answers to their tale:

But,



S O L I L O Q U Y.

39

But, ah ! this gloom, this lethargy of thought,  
Yields not repose ; I sigh the hour away ;  
The next rolls on, and leaves me still oppress'd.  
But, oh ! swift-footed Time, thou ceaseless racer, 35  
Thou who hast chac'd five thousand years before thee,  
With all their great events, and minute trifles,  
Haste, with redoubled speed, bring on the hour,  
When dark Oblivion's dusky veil shall shroud  
Too painful Memory. —————

40

A D D R E S S  
T O  
F R I E N D S H I P.

---

**F**RIENDSHIP! thou noblest ardor of the soul!

Immortal essence! languor's best support!

Chief dignifying proof of glorious man!

Firm cement of the world! endearing tie,

Which binds the willing soul, and brings along 5

Her chastest, strongest, and sublimest powers!

All else the dregs of spirit. Love's soft flame,  
Bewildering, leads th' infatuated soul;

Levels,

ADDRESS TO FRIENDSHIP.

61

Levels, depresses, wraps in endless mists,  
Contracts, dissolves, enervates and enslaves, 10  
Relaxes, sinks, distracts, while Fancy fills  
Th' inflaming draught, and aids the calenture.  
Intoxicating charm! yet well refin'd  
By Virtue's brightening flame, pure it ascends,  
As incense in its grateful circles mounts, 15  
Till, mixt and lost, with Thee it boasts thy name.

Thou unfound blessing! woo'd with eager hope,  
As clowns the nightly vapour swift pursue,  
And fain wou'd grasp to cheer their lonely way;  
Vain the wide stretch, and vain the shorten'd breath,  
For, ah! the bright delusion onward flies, 21  
While the sad swain deceiv'd, now cautious treads  
The common beaten track, nor quits it more.

Not unexisting art thou, but so rare,  
That delving souls ne'er find thee; 'tis to thee, 25

When



62 ADDRESS TO FRIENDSHIP.

When found, if ever found, sweet fugitive,  
The noble mind opes all her richest stores ;  
Thy firm, strong hold suits the courageous breast,  
Where stubborn virtues dwell in secret league,  
And each conspires to fortify the rest. 30

Ethereal spirits alone may hope to prove  
Thy strong, yet soften'd rapture ; soften'd more  
When penitence succeeds to injury ;  
When, doubting pardon, the meek, pleading eye  
On which the soul had once with pleasure dwelt, 35  
Swims in the tear of sorrow and repentance.  
The faultless mind with treble pity views  
The tarnish'd friend, who feels the sting of shame ;  
'Tis then too little barely to *forgive* ;  
Nor can the soul rest on that frigid thought, 40  
But rushing swiftly from her Stoic heights,  
With all her frozen feelings melted down  
By Pity's genial beams, she sinks, distressed,

# ADDRESS TO FRIENDSHIP.

63

Shares the contagion, and with lenient hand

Lifts the warm chalice fill'd with consolation. 45

Yet Friendship's name oft decks the crafty lip,

With seeming virtue clothes the ruthless soul;

Grief-soothing notes, well feign'd to look like Truth,

Like an insidious serpent softly creep

To the poor, guileless, unsuspecting heart, 50

Wind round in wily folds, and sinking deep

Explore her sacred treasure, basely heave

Her hoard of woes to an unpitying world;

First sooths, ensnares, exposes and betrays.

What art thou, fiend, who thus usurp'st the form 55

Of the soft Cherub? Tell me, by what name

The ostentatious call thee, thou who wreck'st

The gloomy peace of sorrow-loving souls?

Why thou art Vanity, ungenerous sprite,

Who tarnishest the action deem'd so great, 60

And of soul-saving essence. But for thee,

How

How pure, how bright wou'd THERON's virtues shine;  
 And, but that *Thou* art incorp'rate with the flame,  
 Which else wou'd blefs where'er its beams illume,  
 My grateful spirit had recorded here 65  
*Thy* splendid seemings. Long I've known their worth.

O, 'tis the deepest error man can prove,  
 To fancy joys disinterested can live,  
 Indiffoluble, pure, unmix'd with felf;  
 Why, 'twere to be immortal, 'twere to own 70  
 No part but spirit in this chilling gloom.

My foul 's ambitious, and its utmost stretch  
 Wou'd be, to own a friend—but that's deny'd.  
 Now, at this bold avowal, gaze, ye eyes,  
 Which kindly melted at my woe-fraught tale; 75  
 Start back, Benevolence, and shun the charge;  
 Soft bending Pity, fly the sullen phrase,  
 Ungrateful as it seems. My abject fate

Excites



ADDRESS TO FRIENDSHIP.

65

Excites the willing hand of Charity,

The momentary sigh, the pitying tear,

80

And instantaneous act of bounty bland,

To Misery so kind; yet not to you,

Bounty, or Charity, or Mercy mild,

The pensive thought applies fair Friendship's name;

That name which never yet cou'd dare exist

85

But in equality

\* \* \* \* \*

TO THE

Honourable H——E W——E,

ON READING

# The CASTLE of OTRANTO.

December, 1784.

---

**T**O praise thee, WALPOLE, asks a pen divine,  
And common sense to me is hardly given;  
BIANCA'S Pen now owns the daring line,  
And who expects *her* muse should drop from Heaven.

My fluttering tongue, light, ever veering round, 5  
On Wisdom's narrow point has never fix'd;  
I dearly love to hear the ceaseless sound,  
Where Noise and Nonsense are completely mix'd.

The

ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO. 67

The empty tattle, true to female rules,  
 In which thy happier talents ne'er appear, 10  
 Is mine, nor mine alone, for mimic fools,  
 Who boast thy sex, BIANCA's foibles wear.

Supreme in prate shall woman ever sit,  
 While Wisdom smiles to hear the senseless squall;  
 Nature, who gave me tongue, deny'd me wit, 15  
 Folly I worship, and she claims me all.

The drowsy eye, half-closing to the lid,  
 Stares on OTRANTO's walls; grim terrors rise,  
 The horrid helmet strikes my soul unbid,  
 And with thy CONRAD, lo! BIANCA dies! 20

Funereal plumes now wave; ALPHONSO's ghost  
 Frowns o'er my shoulder; silence aids the scene,  
 The taper's flame, in fancy'd blueness lost,  
 Pale spectres shews, to MANFRED only seen.



68 ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO.

Ah! MANFRED! thine are bitter draughts of woe, 25

Strong gusts of passion hurl thee on thy fate;

Tho' eager to elude, thou meet'st the blow,

And for RICARDO MANFRED weeps in state.

By all the joys which treasur'd virtues yield,

I feel thy agonies in WALPOLE'S line; 30

Love, pride, revenge, by turns maintain the field,

And hourly tortures rend my heart for thine.

Hail, magic pen! that strongly paint'st the soul,

Where fell Ambition holds his wildest roar;

The whirlwind rages to the distant pole, 35

And Virtue, stranded, pleads her cause no more.

Where's MANFRED'S refuge? WALPOLE, tell me where?

Thy pen to great St. NICHOLAS points the eye;

E'en MANFRED calls to guard ALPHONSO'S heir,

The conscious shame oft gives his tongue the lie.

MATILDA!

ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO. 69

MATILDA ! ah, how soft thy yielding mind, 41

When hard obedience cleaves thy timid heart !

How nobly strong, when love and virtue join'd

To melt thy soul and take a lover's part !

Ah, rigid duties, which two souls divide ! 45

Whose iron talons rend the panting breast !

Pluck the dear image from the widow'd side,

Where Love had lull'd its every care to rest.

HYPOLITA ! fond, passive to excess,

Her low submission suits not souls like mine ; 50

BIANCA might have lov'd her MANFRED less,

Not offer'd less at great Religion's shrine.

Implicit Faith, all hail ! Imperial man

Exacts submission ; reason we resign ;

Against our senses we adopt the plan 55

Which Reverence, Fear, and Folly think divine.

70 ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO.

But be it so, BIANCA ne'er shall prate,  
Nor ISABELLA's equal powers reveal;  
You MANFREDs boast your power, and prize your state;  
We ladies our omnipotence conceal. 60

But, Oh! thou strange-inventing WALPOLE guide,  
Ah! guide me thro' thy subterranean isles,  
Ope the trap-door where all thy powers reside,  
And mimic Fancy real woe beguiles.

The kind inventress dries the streaming tear, 65  
The deep-resounding groan shall faintly die,  
The sigh shall sicken ere it meet the air,  
And Sorrow's dismal troop affrighted fly.

Thy jawless skeleton of JOPPA's wood  
Stares in my face, and frights my mental eye; 70  
Not stiffen'd worse the love-sick FREDERIC stood,  
When the dim spectre shriek'd the dismal cry.

But



ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO. 71

But whilst the Hermit does my soul affright,

Love dies—Lo! in yon corner down he kneels;

I shudder—see the taper sinks in night, 75

He rises, and his fleshless form reveals.

Hide me, thou parent Earth! see low I fall,

My sins now meet me in the fainting hour;

Say, do thy Manes for Heaven's vengeance call,

Or can I free thee from an angry power? 80

STELLA! if WALPOLE's spectres thus can scare,

Then near that great Magician's walls ne'er tread,

He'll surely conjure many a spirit there,

Till, fear-struck, thou art number'd with the dead.

Oh! with this noble Sorcerer ne'er converse, 85

Fly, STELLA, quickly from the magic storm;

Or, soon he'll close thee in some high-plum'd hearse,

Then raise another Angel in thy form.

72 ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO.

Trust not his art, for should he stop thy breath,  
And good ALPHONSO's ghost unbidden rise; 90  
He'd vanish, leave thee in the jaws of death,  
And quite forget to close thy aching eyes.

But is BIANCA safe in this low vale?  
For should his Goblins stretch their dusky wing,  
Would they not bruise me for the faucy tale, 95  
Would they not pinch me for the truths I sing?

Yet whisper not I've call'd him names, I fear  
His ARIEL would my hapless sprite torment,  
He'd cramp my bones, and all my sinews tear;  
Should STELLA blab the secret I'd prevent. 100

But hush, ye winds, ye crickets chirp no more,  
I'll shrink to bed, nor these sad omens hear,  
An hideous rustling shakes the lattic'd door,  
His spirits hover in the fightless air.

Now,

ON THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO. 73

Now, MORPHEUS, shut each entrance of my mind, 105

Sink, sink, OTRANTO, in this vacant hour !

To thee, Oh, balmy GOD ! I'm all resign'd,

To thee e'en WALPOLE's wand resigns its power,



TO HER GRACE

The Duchess Dowager of PORTLAND.

---

**N**ATURE! thou active Principle, whose depths  
The curious mind wou'd willingly explore;  
Thou, who in universal order sway'st  
The jarring atoms of a various world!  
The SCEPTIC's Deity! whose 'wilder'd soul  
Ne'er reach'd, by Faith, thy first stupendous cause!  
Immediate emanation of a God!  
O, swell the untaught rapture; bid it rise  
Spontaneous in my bare uncultur'd mind!  
Thou shalt aspire, when Gratitude assists,

5  
10

To

TO THE DUCHESS OF PORTLAND. 75

To nobler heights than Science ever dar'd.  
Then found with ecstasy a PORTLAND's name,  
And bid it live beyond the wreck of worlds.  
For her let Fancy pierce the deep abyfs,  
Dart thro' the liquid element, and tread 15  
The shelly pavement, dazzling with the glare  
Of varied hues; the lively coral here,  
Here the pale pearl; the lovely vivid green  
Of brilliant onyx, and the sapphire's blue.

The TRITONS sporting in their oozy grots, 20  
Forget to heave the tempest-loving wave;  
The huge Leviathan, which late had 'scap'd  
Norwegian toils, and, stung by fear, descends  
More swift than eagles mount meridian heights,  
Feels rapture added to the joy of life, 25  
Whilst NEPTUNE, from his floating couch, thus  
speaks:

“ PORTLAND my deep dominions dares explore,

“ Nor

76 TO THE DUCHESS DOWAGER

" Nor here alone the Naturalist pursues  
 " Those hidden gems by vulgar souls ne'er priz'd ;  
 " For her the bold adventurer shall dare 30  
 " The golden serpent in ARABIAN wilds,  
 " ASPHALTITES, and the venerable NILE,  
 " Pluck the fair apple which GOMORRAH's flame  
 " Has fill'd with sulphur ; tread once hallow'd earth  
 " Where ancient SION stood ; those heights ascend 35  
 " Which pious NOAH, oft DEUCALION call'd,  
 " First hail'd with grateful joy, and fearless press  
 " The CASPIAN wave : for her the rover seeks  
 " The scatter'd remnants of a ruin'd world.  
 " But that the surge yon planet wou'd o'erwhelm, 40  
 " The roots of Ocean wou'd I throw to land,  
 " And all my gems shou'd meet her generous eye ;  
 " — It must not be ; great JOVE's indignant frown  
 " Wou'd shrink each coward wave beneath his fellow.  
 " This boon refus'd, I gave a nobler still 45  
 " In sweet exchange ; magnificently good,



" Her godlike soul the wanderer shall sooth,  
 " Chace the sad gloom from Sorrow's woe-funk eye,  
 " And bid each future minute fly in peace."

Thus spake the God, the list'ning furies catch 50  
 The potent sounds, and waft them to the shore;  
 Echo to MANTUAN groves the strain prolong'd;  
 But TROYUS had long forsook the shade;  
 And, since his absence, Melody has mourn'd.

OF POETRY AND [ 78 ]  
" Her godlike soul the wanderer shall lose,"  
" Chase the sad bloom from sorrow's woe-torn eye,"  
" And bid each tear drop by in vain."  
**On Mrs. MONTAGU.**

Thus spake the God, the lightning furies catch  
The potent sounds, and wait them to the shore;  
**W**HY boast, O arrogant, imperious man,  
Perfection so exclusive? are thy powers  
Nearer approaching Deity? can'st thou solve  
Questions which high Infinity propounds,  
Soar nobler flights, or dare immortal deeds, 5  
Unknown to woman, if she greatly dares  
To use the powers assign'd her? Active strength,  
The boast of animals, is clearly thine;  
By this upheld, thou think'st the lesson rare  
That female virtues teach; and poor the height 10  
Which female wit obtains. The theme unfolds  
Its ample maze, for MONTAGU befriends  
The puzzled thought, and, blazing in the eye

Of

Of boldest Opposition, strait presents  
The soul's best energies, her keenest powers,  
Clear, vigorous, enlighten'd; with firm wing  
Swift she o'ertakes *his* Muse, which spread afar  
Its brightest glories in the days of yore;  
Lo! where she, mounting, spurns the steadfast  
earth,  
And, sailing on the cloud of science, bears  
The banner of Perfection.——

Ask GALLIA's mimic sons how strong her powers,  
Whom, flush'd with plunder from her SHAKESPEARE'S  
page,  
She swift detects amid their dark retreats  
(Horrid as CACUS in their thievish dens);  
Regains the trophies, bears in triumph back  
The pilfer'd glories to a wand'ring world.  
So STELLA boasts, from her the tale I learn'd;  
With pride she told it, I with rapture heard.

O, Mon-



O, MONTAGU! forgive me, if I sing 30  
 Thy wisdom temper'd with the milder ray  
 Of soft humanity, and kindness bland;  
 So wide its influence, that the bright beams  
 Reach the low vale where mists of ignorance lodge,  
 Strike on the innate spark which lay immers'd, 35  
 Thick clogg'd, and almost quench'd in total night—  
 On me it fell, and cheer'd my joyless heart.

Unwelcome is the first bright dawn of light  
 To the dark soul; impatient, she rejects,  
 And fain wou'd push the heavenly stranger back; 40  
 She loaths the cranny which admits the day;  
 Confus'd, afraid of the intruding guest;  
 Disturb'd, unwilling to receive the beam,  
 Which to herself her native darkness shews.

The effort rude to quench the cheering flame 45  
 Was mine, and e'en on STELLA cou'd I gaze

With

With fullen envy, and admiring pride,  
Till, doubly rous'd by MONTAGU, the pair  
Conspire to clear my dull, imprison'd sense,  
And chase the mists which dimm'd my visual beam.

Oft as I trod my native wilds alone, 51  
Strong gusts of thought wou'd rise, but rise to die;  
The portals of the swelling soul ne'er op'd  
By liberal converse, rude ideas strove  
Awhile for vent, but found it not, and died. 55  
Thus rust the Mind's best powers. Yon starry orbs,  
Majestic ocean, flowery vales, gay groves,  
Eye-wasting lawns, and Heaven-attempting hills,  
Which bound th' horizon, and which curb the view;  
All those, with beauteous imagery, awak'd 60  
My ravish'd soul to extacy untaught,  
To all the transport the rapt sense can bear;  
But all expir'd, for want of powers to speak;  
All perish'd in the mind as soon as born,

Eras'd more quick than cyphers on the shore, 65  
O'er which the cruel waves, unheedful, roll.

Such timid rapture as young \* EDWIN seiz'd,  
When his lone footsteps on the Sage obtrude,  
Whose noble precept charm'd his wond'ring ear,  
Such rapture fill'd † LACTILLA's vacant soul, 70  
When the bright Moralist, in softness drest,  
Opes all the glories of the mental world,  
Deigns to direct the infant thought, to prune  
The budding sentiment, uprear the stalk  
Of feeble fancy, bid idea live, 75  
Woo the abstracted spirit from its cares,  
And gently guide her to the scenes of peace.  
Mine was that balm, and mine the grateful heart,  
Which breathes its thanks in rough, but timid strains.

\* See the Minstrel.

† The Author.



## CLIFTON HILL.

Written in JANUARY 1785.

**I**N this lone hour, when angry storms descend,  
 And the chill'd soul deplores her distant friend;  
 When all her sprightly fires inactive lie,  
 And gloomy objects fill the mental eye;  
 When hoary Winter strides the northern blast,      5  
 And FLORA's beauties at his feet are cast;  
 Earth by the grisly tyrant desert made,  
 The feather'd warblers quit the leafless shade;  
 Quit those dear scenes where life and love began,  
 And, cheerless, seek the savage haunt of man;      10  
 How mourns each tenant of the silent grove!  
 No soft sensation tunes the heart to love;

No fluttering pulse awakes to Rapture's call;

No strain responsive aids the water's fall.

The Swain neglects his Nymph, yet knows not why;

The Nymph, indifferent, mourns the freezing sky; 16

Alike insensible to soft desire,

She asks no warmth—but from the kitchen fire;

Love seeks a milder zone; half sunk in snow,

LACTILLA, shivering, tends her fav'rite cow; 20

The bleating flocks now ask the bounteous hand,

And chrystal streams in frozen fetters stand.

The beauteous red-breast, tender in her frame,

Whose murder marks the fool with treble shame,

Near the low cottage door, in pensive mood, 25

Complains, and mourns her brothers of the wood.

Her song oft wak'd the soul to gentle joys,

All but his ruthless soul whose gun destroys.

For this, rough clown, long pains on thee shall

wait,

And freezing want avenge their hapless fate; 30

For

For these fell murders may'st thou change thy kind,  
In outward form as savage as in mind;  
Go, be a bear of Pythagorean name,  
From man distinguish'd by thy hideous frame.

Tho' flow and pensive now the moments roll, 35  
Successive months shall from our torpid soul  
Hurry these scenes again; the laughing hours  
Advancing swift, shall strew spontaneous flowers;  
The early-peeping snowdrop, crocus mild,  
And modest violet, grace the secret wild; 40  
Pale primrose, daisy, maypole-decking sweet,  
And purple hyacinth together meet:  
All Nature's sweets in joyous circle move,  
And wake the frozen soul again to love.

The ruddy swain now stalks along the vale, 45  
And snuffs fresh ardour from the flying gale;



The landscape rushes on his untaught mind,  
Strong raptures rise, but raptures undefin'd;  
He louder whistles, stretches o'er the green,  
By screaming milk-maids, not unheeded, seen; 50  
The downcast look ne'er fixes on the swain,  
They dread his eye, retire and gaze again.  
'Tis mighty Love—Ye bloomings maids, beware,  
Nor the lone thicket with a lover dare.  
No high romantic rules of honour bind 55  
The timid virgin of the rural kind;  
No conquest of the passions e'er was taught,  
No meed e'er given them for the vanquish'd thought.  
To sacrifice, to govern, to restrain,  
Or to extinguish, or to hug the pain, 60  
Was never theirs; instead, the fear of shame  
Proves a strong bulwark, and secures their fame;  
Shielded by this, they flout, reject, deny,  
With mock disdain put the fond lover by;

Unreal

# CLIFTON HILL.

87

Unreal scorn, stern looks, affected pride, 65  
Awe the poor swain, and save the trembling bride.

As o'er the upland hills I take my way,  
My eyes in transport boundless scenes survey :  
Here the neat \* dome where sacred raptures rise, 69  
From whence the contrite groan shall pierce the skies;  
Where sin-struck souls bend low in humble prayer,  
And waft that sigh which ne'er is lost in air.

Ah! sacred turf! here a fond Parent lies,  
How my soul melts while dreadful scenes arise!  
The past! Ah! shield me, Mercy! from that thought,  
My aching brain now whirls, with horror fraught. 76  
Dead! can it be? 'twas here we frequent stray'd,  
And these sad records mournfully survey'd.  
I mark'd the verse, the skulls her eye invite,  
Whilst my young bosom shudder'd with affright! 80

\* CLIFTON Church. In this church-yard the Author's Mother was buried.

My heart recoil'd, and shun'd the loathsome view ;  
 " Start not, my child, each human thought subdue,  
 She calmly said ; this fate shall once be thine,  
 My woes pronounce that it shall first be mine."  
 Abash'd, I caught the awful truths she sung, 85  
 And on her firm resolves one moment hung ;  
 Vain boast—my bulwark tumbles to the deep,  
 Amaz'd—alone I climb the craggy steep ;  
 My shrieking soul deserted, fullen views  
 The depths below, and Hope's fond strains refuse ; 90  
 I listen'd not—She louder struck the lyre,  
 And love divine, and moral truths conspire,

The proud \* Cræsean crew, light, cruel, vain,  
 Whose deeds have never swell'd the Muses' strain,  
 Whose bosoms others sorrows ne'er assail, 95 }  
 Who hear, unheeding, Misery's bitter tale,  
 Here call for satire, would the verse avail.

\* It is supposed this word is derived, though not very legitimately, from CROESUS.



Rest, impious race!—The Muse pursues her flight,  
Breathes purer air on VINCENT's rugged height;  
Here nibbling flocks of scanty herbage gain 100  
A meal penurious from the barren plain;  
Crop the low niggard bush; and patient, try  
The distant walk, and every hillock nigh:  
Some bask, some bound, nor terrors ever know,  
Save from the human form, their only foe. 105  
Ye bleating innocents! dispel your fears,  
My woe-struck soul in all your troubles shares;  
'Tis but LACTILLA—fly not from the green:  
Long have I shar'd with you this guiltless scene.  
'Tis mine to wander o'er the dewy lawn, 110  
And mark the pallid streak of early dawn;  
Lo! the grey dusk that fill'd the vacant space,  
Now fleets, and infant light pursues the chase;  
From the hill top it seeks the valley low;  
Inflam'd, the cheeks of morn with blushes glow; 115  
Behold

Behold it 'whelm'd in a bright flood of day,  
It strives no more, but to the God gives way.

Ye silent, solemn \*, strong, stupendous heights,  
Whose terror-striking frown the school-boy frights  
From the young daw; whilst in your rugged breast  
The chattering brood, secured by Horror, rest. 121  
Say, Muse, what arm the low'ring brothers cleft,  
And the calm stream in this low cradle left?  
Coëval with Creation they look down,  
And, funder'd, still retain their native frown. 125  
Beneath those heights, lo! balmy springs † arise,  
To which pale Beauty's faded image flies;  
Their kindly powers life's genial heat restore,  
The tardy pulse, whose throbs were almost o'er,  
Here beats a livelier tune. The breezy air, 130  
To the wild hills invites the languid fair:

\* St. VINCENT's rocks, between which flows the River Avon.

† The Hot Wells.

Fear not the western gale, thou tim'rous maid,  
Nor dread its blast shall thy soft form invade ;  
Tho' cool and strong the quick'ning breezes blow  
And meet thy panting breath, 'twill quickly grow 135  
More strong ; then drink the odoriferous draught,  
With unseen particles of health 'tis fraught.

Sit not within the threshold of Despair,  
Nor plead a weakness fatal to the fair ;  
Soft term for INDOLENCE, politely given, 140  
By which we win no joy from earth or heaven.

Foul Fiend ! thou bane of health, fair Virtue's bane,  
Death of true pleasure, source of real pain !  
Keen exercise shall brace the fainting soul,  
And bid her slacken'd powers more vigorous roll. 145

Blame not my rustic lay, nor think me rude,  
If I avow Conceit's the grand prelude  
To dire disease and death. Your high-born maid,  
Whom fashion guides, in youth's first bloom shall fade ;



She seeks the cause, th' effect would fain elude, 150  
 By Death's o'erstretching stride too close pursu'd,  
 She faints within his icy grasp, yet stares,  
 And wonders why the Tyrant yet appears—  
 Abrupt—so soon—Thine, Fashion, is the crime,  
 Fell Diffipation does the work of time. 155

How thickly cloth'd, yon \* rock of scanty foil,  
 Its lovely verdure scorns the hand of Toil.  
 Here the deep green, and here the lively plays,  
 The russet birch, and ever-blooming bays;  
 The vengeful black-thorn, of wild beauties proud, 160  
 Blooms beauteous in the gloomy-chequer'd crowd:  
 The barren elm, the useful feeding oak,  
 Whose hamadryad ne'er should feel the stroke  
 Of axe relentless, till twice fifty years  
 Have crown'd her woodland joys, and fruitful cares.

\* LEIGH Wood.

The

The pois'nous reptiles here their mischiefs bring, 166  
And thro' the helpless sleeper dart the sting;  
The toad envenom'd, hating human eyes,  
Here springs to light, lives long, and aged dies.  
The harmless snail, slow-journeying, creeps away, 170  
Sucks the young dew, but shuns the bolder day.  
(Alas! if transmigration should prevail,  
I fear LACTILLA's soul must house in snail.)  
The long-nosed mouse, the woodland rat is here,  
The sightless mole, with nicely-pointed ear; 175  
The timid rabbit hails th' impervious gloom,  
Eludes the dog's keen scent, and shuns her doom.

Various the tenants of this tangled wood,  
Who skulk all day, all night review the flood,  
Chew the wash'd weed driven by the beating wave, 180  
Or feast on dreadful food, which hop'd a milder grave.  
Hail, useful channel! Commerce spreads her wings,  
From either pole her various treasure brings;

Wafted

Wafted by thee, the mariner long stray'd,  
Clasps the fond parent, and the sighing maid ; 185  
Joy tunes the cry ; the rocks rebound the roar,  
The deep vibration quivers 'long the shore ;  
The merchant hears, and hails the peeping mast,  
The wave-drench'd sailor scorns all peril past ;  
Now love and joy the noisy crew invite, 190  
And clumsy music crowns the rough delight.

Yours be the vulgar dissonance, while I  
Cross the low stream, and stretch the ardent  
eye  
O'er Nature's wilds ; 'tis peace, 'tis joy serene,  
The thought as pure as calm the vernal scene. 195  
Ah, lovely meads ! my bosom lighter grows,  
Shakes off her huge oppressive weight of woes,  
And swells in guiltless rapture ; ever hail,  
The tufted grove, and the low-winding vale !



Low not, ye herds, your lusty Masters bring 200  
 The crop of Summer ; and the genial Spring  
 Feels for your wants, and softens Winter's rage,  
 The hoarded hay-stack shall your woes assuage ;  
 Woes summ'd in one alone, 'tis Nature's call,  
 That secret voice which fills creation all. 205

Beneath this stack \* Louisa's dwelling rose,  
 Here the fair Maniac bore three Winters snows.  
 Here long she shiver'd, stiffening in the blast,  
 The lightnings round their livid horrors cast ;  
 The thunders roar, while rushing torrents pour, 210  
 And add new woes to bleak affliction's hour ;  
 The heavens lour dismal while the storm descends,  
 No Mother's bosom the soft maid befriends ;

\* The beautiful unfortunate Louisa, fugitive Foreigner, lived three years in a state of distraction under this hay-stack, without going into a house. She once confessed, in a lucid interval, that she had escaped from a Convent, in which she had been confined by her father, on refusing a marriage of his proposing, her affections being engaged to another man.

But,

But, frighten'd, o'er the wilds she swiftly flies,  
 And drench'd with rains, the roofless hay-stack tries.  
 The morn was fair, and gentle — sought 216  
 These lonely woodlands, friends to sober Thought;  
 With Solitude, the slow-pac'd maid is seen  
 Tread the dark grove, and unfrequented green,  
 Well — knew their lurkings; PHOEBUS shone, 220  
 While, musing, she pursued the track alone.  
 O, thou kind friend! whom here I dare not name,  
 Who to LOUISA's shed of misery came,  
 Lur'd by the tale, sigh'd o'er her beauteous form,  
 And gently drew her from the beating storm, 225  
 Stand forth—defend, for well thou canst, the cause  
 Of Heaven, and justify its rigid laws;  
 Yet own that human laws are harshly given,  
 When they extend beyond the will of Heaven.  
 Say, can thy pen for that hard duty plead, 230  
 By which the meek and helpless maid's decreed

To

To dire seclusion ! Sequest'rd from guiltless joys,  
To where corroding grief the frame destroys ;  
Monastic glooms, which active virtue cramp,  
Where horrid silence chills the vital lamp ; 235  
Slowly and faint the languid pulses beat,  
And the chill'd heart forgets its genial heat ;  
The dim sunk eye, with hopeless glance, explores  
The solemn aisles, and death-denouncing doors,  
Ne'er to be past again.—Now heaves the sigh, 240  
Now unavailing sorrows fill the eye :  
Fancy once more brings back the long-lost youth  
To the fond soul, in all the charms of Truth ;  
She welcomes the lov'd image ; busy Thought  
Pourtrays the past, with guiltless pleasures fraught ;  
'Tis momentary bliss, 'tis rapture high, 246  
The heart o'erflows, and all is extacy.  
MEMORY ! I charge thee yet preserve the shade,  
Ah ! let not yet the glittering colours fade !

H

Forbear



Forbear the cruel future yet to view, 250  
 When the sad soul must bid a long adieu,  
 E'en to its fancied bliss—Ah! turn not yet  
 Thou wretched bankrupt, that must soon forget  
 This farewell draught of joy: lo! Fancy dies,  
 E'en the thin phantom of past pleasure flies. 255  
 Thought sinks in real woe; too poor to give  
 Her present bliss, she bids the future live;  
 The spirit soon quits that fond clasp, for see,  
 The future offers finish'd misery.  
 Hope quite extinct, lo! frantic thro' the aisles 260  
 She raves, while SUPERSTITION grimly smiles.  
 Th' exhausted mourner mopes, then wildly stalks  
 Round the drear dome, and seeks the darkest walks.  
 The glance distracted each sad sister meets,  
 The sorrow-speaking eye in silence greets 265  
 Each death-devoted maid; LOUISA here  
 Runs thro' each various shape of sad despair;

Now

Now swells with ~~giddy~~ hope, now sick'ning dies;  
Alternate thoughts of death and life arise  
Within her panting soul; the firm resolve, 270  
The new desire, in stronger fears dissolve.  
She starts—then seiz'd the moment of her fate,  
Quits the lone cloyster and the horrid grate,  
Whilst wilder horrors to receive her wait;  
Muffled, on Freedom's happy plains they stand, 275  
And eager seize her not reluctant hand;  
Too late to these mild shores the mourner came,  
For now the guilt of flight o'erwhelms her frame:  
Her broken vows in wild disorder roll,  
And stick like serpents in her trembling soul; 280  
THOUGHT, what art thou? of thee she boasts no more,  
O'erwhelm'd, thou dy'st amid the wilder roar  
Of lawless anarchy, which sweeps the soul,  
Whilst her drown'd faculties like pebbles roll,  
Unloos'd, uptorn, by whirlwinds of despair, 285  
Each well-taught moral now dissolves in air;



Dishevel'd, lo! her beauties show  
 And the wild glance now fills the starting eye;  
 The balls, fierce glaring in their orbits move,  
 Bright spheres, where beam'd the sparkling fires of  
     Love,  
 Now roam for objects which once fill'd her mind,  
 Ah! long-lost objects they must never find,  
 Ill starr'd Louisa! Memory, 'tis a strain,  
 Which fills my soul with sympathetic pain.  
 Remembrance, hence, give thy vain struggles o'er,  
 Nor swell the line with forms that live no more. 296



THE END.